

**CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON MOTHER – TONGUE BASED INSTRUCTION IN THE NEWLY IMPLEMENTED K TO 12 CURRICULUM OF THE PHILIPPINES****Ma. Theresa B. Valerio, Ph.D**Quirino State University- Main Campus  
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**ABSTRACT:** *Despite of the persistent global debates on English as the international Lingua franca versus the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction, the issue along MTB-MLE ( Mother Tongue Based- Multi-lingual Education ) has been pedagogically sweeping across the basic elementary curriculum. One major driving force behind this policy is a common belief that elementary students can learn faster and better if they are being instructed by their teachers using their respective dialects which they initially learned at their respective homes. In the Philippines, one mandate in the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum is the introduction of the MTB instruction specifically in the Kindergarten, and grades 1, 2 and 3 to support the goal of every Child – A Reader and A Writer by grade 1. Since language spoken at home helps improve the child's language and strengthen socio-cultural awareness, teaching materials and assessment shall be in regional or native languages of the bilingual learners. The researcher used questionnaires to obtain the necessary data needed including the respondents' profile. The data gathered were analyzed and interpreted using statistical tools to arrive at valid findings. Results reveal that teachers' perceptions on MTBE have significant differences when they were grouped according to their profile. The chi-square test proved that there is no significant relationship between MTB instruction and the pupils' academic performances. Findings also reveal that one prevailing perception of teachers that inhibit the implementation of MTB-MLE is the deep – seated attitudes about indigenous languages and their suitability along classroom instruction. Hence, this study provides another evidence of the pedagogical implications of the use of mother tongue as one of the mandates of the newly implemented K to 12 curriculum in the Philippine setting.*

**KEYWORDS:** Academic performances, Lingua Franca Mother Tongue Based Instruction, Multi-lingual education

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**INTRODUCTION**

In every learning institution, language prescriptions among the educators and the learners have always been the crux of the issue. The actual impact of MTB-MLE along instruction has been the subject of interest among linguistic researches. The Philippines, being a country of multi-lingual dwellers has been adapting the policy of the mother tongue based instruction as one of the mandate of the newly embraced K to 12 curriculum which was abruptly embraced by the Department of Education last June, 2012. The curriculum is incessantly bothering the academe considering that Filipinos in the country has 180 languages including the vernaculars. Pedagogically speaking, upon the implementation of the new curriculum, Filipino teachers and learners from different linguistic backgrounds and from varied cultural communities of the country are continuously facing the challenges of mother tongue based education( MTBE ) to keep in pace with the demands of education on both countrywide level and international level.

Initially, the child's linguistic background is the fountainhead of his cognitive ability. Usually, as the child magnifies his years in his academic phases, the pedagogical transition of learning toward the second language comes in. The mother tongue based education usually takes place in the language or dialect by which the learners learned from their parents and at home. Hence, the learners enter into the cocoon of bilingualism or multilingualism.

Bilingualism or multilingualism as part of the child's education program comes as the core of some pedagogical issues. In a more profound perspectives, MTBE pertains to the bilingual education across multiple language societies—each community using its own vernacular aside from the prescribed language of instruction in the learning institutions.

### **The K to 12 Curriculum in the Philippine Setting**

As a matter of practice, the curriculum in the Philippines is revised every ten years, but the swift phases of changes in education and the global demands of the Filipino society necessitate the update of the curriculum to make it responsive to emerging demands of the learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To keep abreast with the demand of the world's changing technology, the education curriculum in the Philippines tried to keep in pace with the global trends. Finally, for the school year 2012, the K to 12 basic education curriculum was first implemented in the Philippines.

The mother tongue based instruction is one of the refinement of the newly implemented curriculum. Currently, the K to 12 remains to be an endeavor in progress among the educators of the country. Aside from the issue of educational essence, the refinement of the education curriculum was guided by the global needs, as concomitant in the *Education for All Plan 2015* which aims to rationalize its content in order to improve students' skills and contribute to the fulfillment of functional literacy.

During these past decade, there were only three countries in the world that do not have the K to 12 curriculum. These were the countries of Djibouti and Angola. Until recently, in June 2012, the Philippines has finally implemented the K to 12 curriculum. One of its educational mandate is the introduction of the MTB (Mother Tongue Based) instruction specifically in the Kindergarten, and grades 1, 2 and 3 as one of the academic features of the recently implemented K to 12 Curriculum. This language policy supports one of the of UNESCO (2008) which bear out its sprouting interest in promoting mother tongue-based education and to develop learning programs using the mother tongue.

Linguists and language researchers have the emergent awareness that mother tongue (MT) education is more effective than bilingual or second language medium of instruction (Heugh, 2002: 171; Rademeyer, 2005:7). Hence, as one of the reforms of the new curriculum of the Philippines, the vernaculars of the different regions of the country take the important role specifically in the educational system of the elementary level. To brace this role, the Department of Education (DepEd) has implemented the use of mother tongue as a channel of instruction (DepEd order No. 74, series of 2009).

The mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction in all learning areas except in the teaching of Filipino and English subjects. The mother tongue subject becomes a part of the curriculum. The vernacular of the learner is used on the development of reading and speaking from Grades 1 to 3.

As a country of multi-dialectal learners, the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction leads the bilingual learners to acknowledge their roots which lead to the appreciation of cultural linguistic heritage of the country. The use of multiple languages in the learning institutions may be attributed to various circumstances, such as the linguistic diversity of a country, cultural heritage, social context and religious attitudes. The use of the mother tongue along instruction mirrors the aspiration of learners to promote national and cultural distinctiveness. Keeping the Philippine local languages alive ensures that the local languages will continue to be appreciated by Filipinos. Amidst the trends of globalization, local dialects can survive through the constant use of the native speakers. (Luistro, 2013) The recently implemented K to 12 curriculum in the Philippines introduces the use of mother tongue as tool for instruction for grades 1 to 3. Considering the country's linguistic abundance with its 180 local languages, (Wa-Mbaleka, 2014) MTBE-MLE is not actually a new policy in the new curriculum as seen in the history of language policy in the Philippines over the past century (Bernardo, 2005).

Some Filipinos are trilingual, speaking an indigenous language plus Filipino, and English. Most Filipinos, however, continue to primarily speak their indigenous language, rather than the national language. Bilingualism becomes the trend among Filipino learners. In fact, bilingual instruction allows teachers and students to interact and learn instinctively creating participatory learning atmosphere that contribute much to cognitive as well as linguistic development. (Benson 2004)

There are many pedagogical considerations which are primarily entangled in delivering quality basic education in all levels of any learning institutions.. One of which is the medium used along instruction. Language is obviously the primary tool for effective communication in the classroom. (Benson, 2005) Since learning along content areas are provided through the mother tongue, the learning of new concepts is not postponed until children become competent in the second language.

Schooling using the second language restrains children's progress in the attainment of knowledge and skills. Consequently, few are able to proceed to higher studies toward employment. Consequently, the bilingual learners then are stuck up to the setting of being stagnant. (Benson, UNESCO 2005)

MTB-MLE policy is also creating bulk of inquiries and challenges among the Filipino teachers.

Most of them are multidialectal. They can speak their vernacular or their respective dialect, the Filipino language and the second language which is English. Teachers have diverse views on whether or not MTB-MLE is pedagogically appropriate for them and their pupils. At present, the MTB-MLE is being implemented in two subjects of the K to 12 curriculum: first as a separate subject area among grades 1-3 ;and second as medium of instruction among the Filipino learners who are bilinguals in nature. (Wa-Mbaleka, 2014).

To help meet the challenges, the Department of Education has partially started to give technical support to language communities. Language policy has been implemented for the Filipino learners to help them escalate the substance of the MTB-MLE toward the appreciation of the local culture of the country. Research has shown that children's first language is the optimal language for literacy and learning throughout primary school (UNESCO, 2008). However, Wa- Mbaleka (2014) found out in his research that though MTB-MLE have some advantages on the local and regional level, it is not perceived advantageously for global

competitiveness. The language profile of the Filipino learners usually shows two or more languages or dialect in his or her learning continuum. This situation has created new challenges for learners as well as the educators especially in the Philippines where there exist at least 180 languages. The use of multiple languages in education may be attributed to innate yet interconnected factors such as the linguistic heterogeneity of a locality or region, language policy and other cultural factors. The use of the mother tongue in its pedagogic aspect reflects the desire of learners to promote national identity toward the preservation of cultural heritage. (Mbaleka, 2014)

### **The Use of Mother tongue Based Education**

The UN has come out in support of mother-tongue based instruction, because their own objective is to heighten the quality of education, with the belief that there is a need to identify and appreciate linguistic minorities through the continuous use of local dialects in the academe. By starting with the language that young learners speak at home, the gap in understanding can be bridged better and easier. Hence, elementary students can better absorb lessons. (Garbes, 2012)

Current series of linguistic research have much revelation on language and literacy. Some researchers conclude that becoming fluent in one's first language is important for overall language and cognitive development, as well as academic achievement. Evidence from Cameroon, India, Mali, the Philippines, South Africa, Vietnam, and elsewhere attests to the benefits of learning in a familiar language. First, children learn to read faster if they speak the language of instruction, because they already have the cognitive basis of vocabulary, knowledge of the construction of the utterances, and the ability to enunciate the sounds of the language. (Ball, 2010).

Amidst the controversy of the use of mother tongue along instruction, language and dialect variation among multidialectal learners and the teachers' dispositions toward this linguistic issue become the core of debates among the educators involved in the K to 12 curriculum.

In order to deal with the linguistic demands of the curriculum, the Filipino teachers should possess the disposition of being a polyglot. This matter points out to the burden of educating the heterogeneous learners considering their dialect variations with different cultural background.

According to Yap, (2010) the mother tongues in the different regions play an important role in the Philippine educational system. The Filipino, being bilingual in nature, has strong ethnic loyalty and honor in using their own native tongues in some occasions. In relation to globalization, the use of mother tongue and the priority in the use of international language sometimes become an interesting topic among the linguists. Martin (2006) mentioned that language preferences of teachers and students are often identified as the reasons behind the continuing deterioration of English language proficiency among Filipino students. Amidst the philosophical battle between English as the second language of Filipinos and Filipino as the national language, some educators consider bilingualism in its pedagogical pedestal. It is generally accepted that teachers of English play a leading role in providing learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. This is according to Arkoudis (2003). However, Goodwyn, et.al (2003) point out that all teachers have stakes in effective literacy. Learners may fail to understand academic concepts through the language they are still learning because their subject content teachers are not skillful of assisting them. (Crandall, 1998).

In any curriculum, teachers must update themselves to the literacy demands of a curriculum especially to the language demands in order to obtain flexible teaching techniques. Learners who have been immersed in the learning environment in which the mother tongue has been used showed statistically significant improvements in their academic performance compared to children who were learning only in Filipino (Walter and Dekker, 2011). Although educational researches are still needed to prove the implications of other based education in various atmospheres and settings, educating the bilingual pupils in their vernacular language improved cognitive acquisition and subject-centered knowledge.

Several linguistic researches have already investigated the affirmative effects of MTBE in different countries of the world. Such studies have been the basis of the promotion of MTBE by UNESCO. In the new K to 12 curriculum, the Philippines has linked up to this language policy. Faculty members are the role models for prospective K-12 teachers and can have a significant impact on teachers' use of instructional materials as well as technology in their future classroom (Parker, 1997). This affects a larger community than Schools of Education because secondary teachers come from all disciplines. The language prescription and teaching materials used by the teacher are intertwined together to promote better learning.

Hence, this study provides another pedagogical evidence on the use of mother tongue and its academic implication in a multi lingual and multidialectal setting from which this study took place. *Sau Mi, Usaren mi* is the Ilocano phrase which is equivalent to the English phrase, *Our dialect, we shall use*".

## FRAMEWORK

The language learning theory as stated by Postman (1996) reiterates that language is a mediating tool in any learning and teaching process. Language learning is not a discrete discipline unconnected from all other learning. Hence, language learning in school is crucial for academic growth toward the pedestal of pedagogical hierarchy. The language of academic discourses and knowledge content of any one subject are closely interconnected.

The use of various languages among multilingual and multidialectal learners may be attributed to numerous factors, such as the linguistic heterogeneity of a country or region, specific social or religious attitudes. The use of the mother tongue in its pedagogic aspect reflects the desire of learners to promote national identity. Language in the academe is clearly a complex socio-cultural process that is continually being weighed up by the multilingual system of the Philippine education. (Bernardo, 2005)

Halliday (1985) expresses some of the complexity of the relationship between language and learning when he explicated about learning language and language used in learning. He further expounded the aspects of language and cognitive development, although it must be emphasized that language is a mediating tool toward the process of constructing meaning and understanding lessons inside the classroom setting.

### Objectives of the Study

The major aim of this paper is (1) to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, number of years of teaching, educational background and ethnicity. (2) to investigate the respondents' perceptions about the use of mother tongue along instruction; (3) assess the

respondents' beliefs about the instructional material needed in the MTB-MLE; (4) to determine the significant relationship between the teachers' perceptions on the MTBE and the learners' academic performances.

### Null Hypothesis of the Study

This study worked on the following null hypothesis : (1) There were no significant differences on the perceptions of the respondents on MTBE when they were grouped according to their profile; and ( 2) there was no significant relationship between the teachers' perceptions on the MTBE and the learners' academic performances.

## METHODOLOGY

In conducting this study, data were gathered with the permission of the Division Superintendent of Quirino province and with the consent of the Principals of each elementary schools. The researcher personally floated the questionnaires to the teacher respondents to ensure the 100% retrieval of the questionnaires including the assurance that the respondents have completely answered the necessary items along their profile in the questionnaires. Interviews were done to clarify some of the respondents answers. Using stratified random sampling, she floated questionnaires to the 64 elementary teachers who have teaching loads in grades 1-3. The data was treated by the statistician using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for easier and more accurate results. The tables were meticulously analyzed and interpreted and the interpretation became the tool in forming the conclusions and finalizing the recommendations.

The respondents' beliefs about the effectiveness of mother tongue based instruction were determined using the weighted mean. ANOVA and T- test were used to assess the significant differences on the respondents' perceptions toward the MTB-MLE. To determine the significant relationship of the respondents' perceptions and the academic performances of the learners, the Chi- Square test was used.

### The Respondents and the Locale of the Study

Quirino Province, a province of multi-dialectal and multi-cultural dwellers, was weaned from its mother province Nueva Vizcaya in 1972. It has six municipalities namely: Diffun, Cabarroguis, Saguday, Aglipay, Maddela and Nagtipunan. Ilocano is the major dialect of the inhabitants of Quirino province. The respondents of this study were the teachers in the Division of Quirino who have teaching loads in Grade 1-3. Using random sampling, 64 teachers were taken as respondents from the different schools of the province. In this research, the 5- point Likert scale was used by the individual respondent to evaluate the given items.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1. The respondents were asked to rate each concern using the following scale:**

Scale	Range	Description	Indicator
5	4.21 - 5.00	Strongly agree	The respondents strongly agree
4	3.41 - 4.20	Agree	The respondent agree
3	2.61 - 3.40	Slightly agree	The respondents slightly agree
2	1.81 - 2.60	Disagree	The respondents disagree
1	1.0 - 1.80	Strongly disagree	The respondents strongly disagree

**Table 2. Profile of the Respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	6	9.38
Female	58	90.62
Total	64	100.00
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
20 - 29	16	25.00
30- 39	23	35.94
40- 49	19	29.69
50- 59	4	6.25
60 and above	2	3.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number of Years Teaching</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1-5 years	21	32.81
6-10 years	18	28.13
11- 15 years	13	20.31
16-20 years	6	9.38
20 years and above	6	9.38
Total	64	100.00
<b>Highest Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Bachelor	18	28.13
With M.A. Units	35	54.69
M.A/ M.S	9	14.06
With Ph.D Units	2	3.12
Ph.D	0	0
Total	64	100.0
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Ilocano	39	60.94
Ifugao	15	23.44
Tagalog	3	4.69
others	7	10.94
Total	64	100.00

It is shown in the table that 90.62 percent of the English respondents were female while 9.38 percent were male. This implies that Grade 1-3 teachers in the Province of Quirino were mostly females. In terms of the respondents' age, the table shows that 35.94 percent of the respondents or 23 of them were within the age bracket of 30- 39. Only 25 percent or 16 of them belonged to the age bracket of 20-29. Only 3.12 percent or 2 of them were 60 years old and above. This implies that majority of the respondents were within their prime ages which ranged from 30 to 39 years old.

With regard to the number of years in teaching, majority of the respondents or 32.81 percent of them have teaching experience within the range of 1- 5 years. Only 28.13 percent of them

has teaching experience of 6-10 years. This implies that most of the respondents taught within the range of 1-5 years.

The table also reveals the educational attainment of the respondents by which 54.69 percent of them have some earning units in their Master's; while 28.13 percent of them obtained the bachelors' degree. Only 14.06% have completed their master's degree. This implies that majority of the respondents have just started their masters' degree.

With regard to the ethnicity of the respondents, 60.94 percent or 39 of them were Ilocanos, 3.44 or 15 respondents were Ifugaos. 4.69 percent or 3 of them were Tagalogs and 10.94 percent or 7 of them belonged to other ethnic affiliations such as Igorots, Kankana-ey, Bukkalot, Ibanag, Tiwali, and Pangasinense. This implies that majority of the respondents were Ilocanos and it was evident that the respondents belong to different linguistic backgrounds.

**Table 3 Respondents' Perceptions On the use of Mother Tongue Along Instruction**

Statements	Mean	Description
1.The use of mother tongue along instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier ,better learning among grade 1-3 students.	3.55	Agree
2.The use of the dialect during class discussion creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom between teachers and students.	3.85	Agree
3.A pupil learns better through the use of mother tongue.	3.48	Agree
4.Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE	3.51	Agree
5.The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among the learners.	3.10	Slightly Agree
6.The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to the bilingual children.	3.11	Slightly Agree
7.The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils.	2.17	Slightly agree
8.A bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners.	2.57	Disagree
Over all Mean	3.16	Slightly Agree

The table presents the respondents' perceptions on the use of mother tongue along instruction from which it is evident that the respondents have *agreed* on the first three statements that elucidate the advantages of the mother tongue based instruction in the pedagogical aspects of the pupils. However, the following statements were perceived by the respondents as *slightly agree*: (1)The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among then learners.; (2)The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to the bilingual children; and (3) The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils. However, the respondents *disagreed* with the statement that a bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners. The overall mean 3.15 implies that the respondents as teachers of bilingual learners *slightly agree* with the statements about the mother tongue based education or MTBE.



**Table 4. Respondents' Perceptions on the Needed Instructional Materials Along the MTB- MLE**

Statements	Mean	Description
1. There are available instructional materials in lessons using the mother tongue.	2.85	<i>Slightly Agree</i>
2. The needed specific instructional material supports the linguistic background of the learners.	2.15	<i>Disagree</i>
3. Big books used in reading were translated into the local dialects.	1.97	<i>Disagree</i>
4. MTB-MLE policy considers the development of graded reading materials in the learners' home language.	3.55	<i>Agree</i>
5. The teacher must be well-versed in the local dialect to provide the learners with the variety of instructional techniques.	3.40	<i>Slightly Agree</i>
6. The Curriculum makers continuously monitor and evaluate the use of mother tongue and needed language materials.	2.85	<i>Slightly Agree</i>
7. The teacher is required to apply appropriate bilingual education techniques on using one language over another.	2.11	<i>Disagree</i>
Over all Mean	2.69	<i>Slightly Agree</i>

It is shown in the data that the respondents have *disagreed* on the following statements : (1) The needed specific instructional material supports the linguistic background of the learners.; (2) Big books used in reading were translated into the local dialects.; and (3) the teacher is required to apply appropriate bilingual education techniques on using one language over another. It is evident in the table presented above that the respondents *slightly agreed* on the availability of the instructional material in the MTBE. This findings supports the study of Pfund & Duit ( 2004) stating that one of the problems along the MTBE instruction is the inadequacy of resources which have been localized unto the common dialect. Unavailability of these instructional materials is not an excuse for the teachers. If there are new instructional materials such as new learning packages, teachers must direct students how to use this learning materials. The overall of *Slightly Agree* implies that the teachers perceived that the instructional materials using the mother tongue have not yet been fully transcribed unto the needed vernacular. Hence, to obtain the realization of the MTBE, materials for both teachers and students must be available in the language of instruction. (MTB-MLE Network [www.mlenetwork.org](http://www.mlenetwork.org)) .The result of this findings is related to the research of Lartec,et.Al(2014) when they mentioned in their study that with the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, the teaching materials should also be written in the learners' vernaculars to achieve consistency. (Laartec,et.al,2014)

**Table 5. Perceptions of the Respondents On MTBE-MLE When they are grouped by Sex**

Statements	t-computed	p-value	Decision
1.The use of mother tongue along instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier ,better learning among grade 1-3 students.	-.417	0.645	Accept Ho
2.The use of the dialect during class discussion creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom between teachers and students.	.181	0.091	Accept Ho
3.A pupil learns better through the use of mother tongue.	1.129	0.838	Accept Ho
4.Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE.	-.681	0.401	Accept Ho
5.The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among the learners.	-.285	0.221	Accept Ho
6.The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to the bilingual children.	.512	0.486	Accept Ho
7.The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils.	.178	.879	Accept Ho
8.A bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners.	.779	.711	Accept Ho

p-value of .05 and below are significant and above .05 are not significant

The T- test shows the perceptions of the respondents on the MTBE-MLE when they were grouped according to sex. Whether teachers were male or female, it did not make any statistical difference in the findings. There were no significant differences on their perceptions on MTBE if they were grouped according to sex. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted.

**Table 6. The Respondents' On MTBE-MLE when Grouped According to Age**

Statements	F-computed	p-value	Decision
1.The use of mother tongue along instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier ,better learning among grade 1-3 students.	4.151*	.001	Reject Ho
2.The use of the dialect during class discussion creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom between teachers and students.	1.186	.314	Accept Ho
3.A pupil learns better through the use of mother tongue.	1.456	.209	Accept Ho
4.Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE.	3.047*	.016	Reject Ho
5.The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among the learners.	.734	.565	Accept Ho
6.The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to the bilingual children.	.240	.909	Accept Ho
7.The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils.	3.324*	.010	Reject Ho
8.A bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners.	2.448*	.041	Reject Ho

p-value of .05 and below are significant and above .05 are not significant

The ANOVA Test proved that the respondents' perceptions varied when they were grouped according to age. There are four statements in the table which indicate that there exist significant differences on their perceptions on MTBE. These statements are as follow: (1) The use of mother tongue along instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier, better learning among grade 1-3 students.; (2) Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE.; (3) The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils.; and (4) a bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners. Whereas, the null hypothesis was accepted along these statements: (1) The use of the dialect during class discussion creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom between teachers and students;(2) A pupil learns better through the use of mother tongue.; (3) The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among the learners.; and lastly, (4) The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to the bilingual children. These findings imply that the respondents' age have influenced their perceptions on the MTBE.

**Table 7. Perceptions of the Respondents On MTBE-MLE when Grouped According to the number of Years in Teaching**

Statements	F-computed	p-value	Decision
1.The use of mother tongue along instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier ,better learning among grade 1-3 students.	1.375	.166	Accept Ho
2.The use of the dialect during class discussion creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom between teachers and students.	.747	.558	Accept Ho
3.A pupil learns better through the use of mother tongue.	2.135*	.006	Reject Ho
4.Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE.	3.191*	.003	Reject Ho
5.The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among the learners.	1.126	.055	Accept Ho
6.The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to the bilingual children.	.474	.771	Accept Ho
7.The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils.	2.161*	.003	Reject Ho
8.A bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners.	.816	.517	Accept Ho

p-value of .05 and below are significant and above .05 are not significant

The table presents that there were significant differences on the perceptions of the respondents when they were grouped according to the number of years of teaching . The null hypothesis was rejected on these statements: (1)A pupil learns better through the use of mother tongue; (2) Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE; and (3) the use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils. Whereas, the null hypothesis was accepted on these five statements : (1)The use of mother tongue along instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier ,better learning among grade 1-3 students.; (2) The use of the dialect during class discussion creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom between teachers and students. (3).The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among the learners.(4).The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to

the bilingual children.; and (5) A bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners. The ANOVA test showed that there exist significant differences on the way the respondents perceived the MTBE when they were grouped according to the number of years in teaching. It is implied that their teaching experiences have effects on the way they perceived the mother tongue based instruction.

**Table 8 Perceptions of the Respondents On MTBE-MLE when Grouped by Ethnicity**

Statements	F-computed	p-value	Decision
1.The use of mother tongue along instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier ,better learning among grade 1-3 students.	2.451*	.003	Reject Ho
2.The use of the dialect during class discussion creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom between teachers and students.	.564	.315	Accept Ho
3.A pupil learns better through the use of mother tongue.	1.47	.209	Accept Ho
4.Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE.	3.050*	.015	Reject Ho
5.The use of mother tongue encourages a relaxing learning atmosphere among the learners.	.734	.368	Accept Ho
6.The policy of MTB-MLE gives positive contributions to the bilingual children.	.240	.917	Accept Ho
7.The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils.	1.321*	.010	Reject Ho
8.A bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners.	1.452*	.039	Reject Ho

p-value of .05 and below are significant and above .05 are not significant

It is evident in the table that when the respondents were grouped according to their ethnicity, their perceptions have significant differences.The following statements led to the rejection of the null hypothesis due to the existence of significant differences:(1) The use of mother tongue long instruction in subjects such as Science and Math denotes easier,better learning among grade 1-3 students.:(2) Pupils benefit much on the policy of MTB-MLE.:(3).The use of mother tongue or dialect assures quality learning among pupils; and (4) A bilingual teacher requires specialized knowledge on the local dialect to assure academic effectiveness for the learners.

The ANOVA test proved that there are significant differences on the perceptions of the respondents when they were grouped according to their ethnicity. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the linguistic background or their ethnic affiliation has affected their perceptions on the mother tongue based education.

**Table 9. Chi-Square Test on the Significant Relationship between the Teachers MTBE perceptions and the Learners' Academic Performance**

Parameters	Mean	Description	Chi-Square value	p-value	Decision
Teachers' Perceptions on the MTBE	3.16	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	124.22	.264	Accept Ho
Pupils' Academic Performance	83.25	<i>Average</i>			

The chi- Square test shows that the teachers' perceptions on mother tongue based education do not have any significant relationship to their learners' academic performances as projected in the p- value of .264. This led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This implies that the perceptions of teachers and the students' performance are not dependent to each other in its pedagogical aspect. This also implies that language factor is not solely the prime factor in determining the pupils' academic performances. The findings imply that there is no categorical proof yet on the actual pedagogical advantages on the use of mother tongue along instruction in the Philippine setting.

## CONCLUSIONS

To keep in pace with the mandate of the newly absorbed curriculum in the Philippines, the current study is intended to investigate the current perceptions of teachers about the MTB-MLE policy as well as the needed teaching materials considering the multilingualism and the bilingual system of the country. Based from the findings of this study, conclusions were formed. With regards to the profile of the respondents, majority of the respondents were female and they were within the age range of 30-39 years old. Most of them have taught within the range of 1-5 years, and they started their masters' degree. Majority of the respondents were dominated by the Ilocanos. The overall mean 3.16 implies that the respondents as teachers of bilingual learners *slightly agree* with the statements about the mother tongue based education or MTBE.

Being a multidialectal teacher with different shades of the Ilocano dialect is an advantage in teaching pupils. However, to support, the linguistic background of the learners, the needed specific instructional materials for the mother tongue based education were still undefined yet. In dealing with pupils who are not all culturally familiar with the same mother tongue, teachers may experience have struggles because they are not expert of the different dialects.

The study also reveals that the respondents were not yet confidently certain whether the instructional materials they presently have can assure that they can really appreciate the MTBE due to the unavailability on localized translation along the instructional materials. As the chi-square value shows, using the mother tongue based instruction cannot really elevate the learners' academic performances. Several other factors can be considered in dealing with MTB instruction. Teaching materials and assessment have not been transcribed into the regional or native languages of the learners. Results also showed that the respondents believed that MTB-MLE policy must consider the development of graded transcribed reading materials in the learners' home language. Significant differences existed when the respondents were grouped according to their ethnicity and according to the number of years of teaching experience. This

implies that linguistic background or their ethnicity have caused variations or differences on the way they perceived the mother tongue based education. There were also significant differences on their perceptions when they were grouped according to the number of years they have been teaching. This implies that the way they perceive the mother tongue based instruction differs based on their teaching experiences.

The use of the mother tongue in its pedagogic aspect reflects the desire of learners to promote national identity, however the teachers seemed to be unprepared yet with the mandate of the new curriculum on the use of mother tongue based instruction. Indeed, the use of local dialects along instruction is clearly a complex process that is continually being redefined by the bilingual and multilingual system of education.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Since language is the tool for academic development and the core of cultural identity and intercultural sustenance, the mother tongue based instruction needs to be given investigation and assessment. It is therefore recommended that educators of the country must be given more trainings for better preparation of localized instructional materials with the use of the mother tongue to keep in pace with the newly mandated policy of the K to 12 basic education curriculum.

The Department of Education must constantly monitor the language mandate of the new curriculum by providing series of evaluation and assessment among the Filipino pupils. Filipino teachers who are teaching in the different regions with learners of different vernaculars must manifest the interest to the academic demands of the curriculum considering the variations of dialects in the different regions of the country. Continuous in-service training in the mother tongue based education, monitoring and support must be provided by the department of Education to ensure that the grade 1-3 teachers have the linguistic skills needed to effectively operate the policy of the K to 12 curriculum along mother tongue based instruction. To support the mother tongue- based policy as one of the mandate of the new curriculum, the Department of Education should provide enough textbooks and teachers' manual to teachers and pupils which has been transcribed into the mother tongue of the learners in the different regions of the country. The Department of Education must constantly monitor the assessment of the impact of MTB-MLE so that it can generally sustain and promote programs and help the educators toward the effective implementation of the language policy as mandated in the newly embraced K to 12 curriculum. To ensure the quality instructional materials, the department of education, publishers, local government, donors, and learning institutions need to collaborate to each other and be given time to acquire, and assess mother tongue and the prescribed language materials

Adequate trainings must have been initially given to the educators of the pupils involved in the newly prescribed subject in grades 1-3 which is the mother tongue subject. It is a separated subject intended for the pupils for them to appreciate their vernacular. Aside from the Language enhancement program for elementary teachers, language trainings for them may be initiated for them to develop and unravel their communicative skills both locally and internationally. In this way, a bilingual educator may maintain the balance between his ethnic identity and the external needs in the internationally competitive world. Further language researches needs to be done to compare the concrete implications of MTB-MLE in the Philippines specifically in

the varied regions of the country and among the bilingual Filipinos who are known to be multilinguals and multidialectals.

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